

CHAPTER 5: EXTERNAL ASSESSMENT

5.1 Overview

The Major Claimant of the host installation, in coordination with Major Claimants of tenant organizations, is responsible for external assessments.

An external assessment has two main parts, as established in Chapter 20 of OPNAVINST 5090.1B, Change 2:

- An annual document review of the installation's IAP and EQA Report, plus any other information available on the installation's performance (see Chapter 4).
- A site visit with a schedule and scope determined by the Major Claimant, based on the annual document review.

The schedule and scope of the site visit are flexible and should be tailored to meet the installation's needs. This allows for varied degrees of compliance or oversight assessments. Based on the annual document review, the Major Claimant may elect to visit the installation immediately, once a year, once every two years, or less often, if appropriate, depending on the installation's condition and circumstances. At a minimum, during the site visit, the Claimant will evaluate the installation's EMS and internal assessment program to determine if the installation is effectively evaluating its compliance status. A site visit may also include compliance evaluations of all environmental program areas or may target particular program areas, as appropriate. The external assessment site visit may be accomplished through the traditional command inspection or as a separate assessment/assistance visit.

Major Claimants are required to document their decisions regarding the scope and frequency of the site visits in an External Assessment Plan (EAP) that must be submitted annually to CNO/N45.

This chapter provides:

- A description of factors that Major Claimants may consider when determining the level of oversight for the external assessment site visits;
- A sample format for the EAP; and
- Guidance for implementing the EAP.

5.2 External Assessment Planning

When determining the scope and frequency of the external assessments, the Major Claimant will review and analyze the submitted IAPs, EQA Reports, and any other available data for each installation under its claimancy. Analysis of available documentation should provide the Major Claimant with an indication of the performance of each installation's internal assessment program and its EMS. Appendix D covers the topic of maturity in environmental programs and EMSs. Table 5-1 outlines factors the Major Claimant may consider when reviewing each installation's environmental performance documentation.

Table 5-1: Factors to be Considered in Planning External Assessments

Information Source	Considerations	Influence on External Assessment Scope and Frequency
Review of IAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the IAP address all applicable media-specific program areas? Does the IAP identify practices, assets, and impacts of which the Major Claimant is aware? Does the IAP include assessments of all tenants aboard the installation? Does the IAP identify required inspections already conducted? Does the IAP address media management assessments? Is the installation's local prioritization of practices and impacts reasonable and clearly described? Do inspection and compliance evaluation frequencies accurately reflect local prioritization of impacts (are higher priority items assessed more frequently)? Which media-specific program areas are receiving the most/least internal oversight? Does this seem appropriate? 	<p>Comprehensive IAPs that are consistent with the Major Claimant's knowledge of the installation's environmental programs will tend to reduce the intensity and frequency of the external assessment, and should focus on EMS Review rather than compliance validation.</p> <p>Incomplete IAPs may indicate inadequate participation in the EQA Program. The scope of external assessments should continue to focus on compliance validation in addition to EMS Review.</p>
Review of EQA Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the EQA Report indicate that the internal assessment is conducted according to the IAP? Is the IAP comprehensive? (See Review of IAP, above.) Does the summary of internal assessment findings, problem solving efforts, and associated corrective actions suggest that sound management decisions are being made on a continuous basis? Does the EQA Report suggest that the installation's compliance and management programs are "self-correcting"? Does the status summary of the installation's overall environmental program indicate program areas that are inadequate or need improvement, and are efforts being taken to address areas needing improvement? Are results presented in the status summary consistent with information available on environmental performance? Has the installation conducted an EMS Review under its internal assessment program? Do the results of the EMS Review suggest that an effective EMS is in place? Does the EQA Report indicate that the installation is pursuing a continuous improvement goal? 	<p>Installations that are able to document strong corrective action programs are likely to have, at least, rudimentary EMS elements in place. As the effectiveness of installation EMSs increases, the scope and frequency of the Major Claimant external assessments should decrease.</p> <p>Installations unable to document strong corrective action programs should require increased scrutiny of their EMSs until these programs are established.</p>

Table 5-1: Factors to be Considered in Planning External Assessments (Continued)

Information Source	Considerations	Influence on External Assessment Scope and Frequency
Maturity of Installation EMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Based on all available data, can the Major Claimant characterize the installation's EMS as "reactive," "progressive," or "proactive": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reactive: compliance-driven; focused on meeting requirements; organized around media programs; limited planning; – Progressive: beginning to address management frameworks; compliance-focused with enhanced corrective action process (i.e., problem solving with root cause analysis and feedback/management review) – Proactive: Comprehensive management framework; enhanced planning and corrective action processes; environmental impact-focused; environmental performance goal. ■ Has the installation internally characterized its EMS in any of its EQA documentation? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Reactive programs should be subject to comprehensive compliance program evaluations and EMS Reviews. ■ Progressive programs should require EMS Reviews and limited compliance validation. ■ Proactive programs should require EMS Reviews only.
Other Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Results from previous ECEs or EQA external assessment site visits (including deficiency descriptions and POA&M submissions). ■ The interval since the last ECE or external assessment. ■ Input to semi-annual DoD Environmental Quality Report In-Progress Review (Measures of Merit). ■ Notices of Violation (NOVs) or other enforcement actions and associated fines and penalties received by the installation. ■ New or changing Federal, State, local, DoD, and/or DoD regulations or policy requirements applicable at the installation. ■ Records of communication between the installation and the Regional Environmental Coordinator (including requests for assistance). ■ Any additional knowledge of the installation's compliance status, problem solving efforts, or EMS performance. 	<p>Data that document an effective, self-correcting compliance and management program at the installation should serve to reduce the scope, intensity, and frequency of external assessments.</p> <p>Data that indicate continuing compliance difficulties suggest internal assessment and corrective action programs are not functioning; therefore, increased scope, intensity, and frequency of external assessments should be warranted.</p>

5.3 Developing the External Assessment Plan (EAP)

Once available data from each installation have been reviewed and analyzed, Major Claimants should determine their oversight plans (external assessment scope and frequency) for each installation within their claimancy. The EAP is intended to be a short, concise document that identifies the schedule and the scope of the site visits planned by the Major Claimant for each of its installations and provides a brief description of the basis for these decisions. The EAP should address all activities in the claimancy including those installations that conduct only administrative functions or activities with minimal environmental requirements that are exempt from the EQA program requirements as described in Chapter 20 of OPNAVINST 5090.1B, Change 2.

Table 5-2 presents a sample format for the EAP. Data in Table 5-2 indicate the flexibility inherent in external assessment planning and show how analyses of IAPs, EQA Reports, and other available data support Major Claimant decisions regarding the level of oversight to be provided. In the examples provided in the table, the Claimant has decided to conduct another external assessment with full compliance evaluation at Installation 5 only two years after its last external assessment due to their unsatisfactory IAP, EQA Report, and assessment results. Installations 6 and 7, however, have successfully demonstrated the performance of their internal assessment program and EMSs through their IAPs, EQA Reports, and excellent results on their last assessment results. The Major Claimant has recognized their efforts by scheduling a four-year interval until their next external assessments.

As required by Chapter 20 of OPNAVINST 5090.1B, Change 2, each Major Claimant will update its EAP annually and submit it to CNO/N45. This update should reflect the review and analyses of the annual updates to IAPs and EQA Reports submitted by the installations as well as changes made by the Claimant as result of external assessments completed during the year.

5.4 Implementing the External Assessment Plan

5.4.1 *Preparing for the External Assessment*

In planning external assessments, Major Claimants are required to coordinate not only with the installation that will be visited, but also with the Major Claimant(s) of tenant activities that have environmentally significant practices. As the scheduled site visit approaches, the Major Claimant needs to assemble and prepare an external assessment team.

The Major Claimant of the host activity notifies the installation's Commanding Officer (CO) of an upcoming external assessment. Like the former ECE program, the notification is likely to be in the form of a memorandum that identifies the tentative schedule and the purpose of the visit. It should also address access to the appropriate personnel, documentation at the installation, and any other requirements the external assessment team may have.

Table 5-2: Sample Major Claimant External Assessment Plan							
Installation/ Tenant	If a Tenant, Host and Major Claimant	Date of Last ECE or External Assessment	Scope ¹ of Last ECE or External Assessment	Planned Date of Next External Assessment	Scope ¹ of Next External Assessment	Media ² for Compliance Assessment	Rationale ³ for Scope of Next External Assessment
Installation 1		01/96	E	02/99	B	All but IR	3, 4
Installation 2		06/96	E	04/99	C		3, 4, 7
Installation 3		03/97	D	11/99	B	Air, WW	3,
Installation 4		09/97	D	06/00	B	HW	3, 4
Installation 5		02/98	C	02/00	C		6, 8
Installation 6		03/98	B	03/02	A		1, 2, 4
Installation 7		10/98	A	10/02	A		1, 2, 4
Installation 8		03/96	D	04/00	D	NEPA, CR	7
Installation 9		02/97	D	11/02	D	All but PEST	7
Installation 10		01/97	E	02/00	B	All but HW	3, 4
Installation 11		06/97	E	04/00	C		3, 4
Installation 12		03/98	D	11/01	B	NR,CR,NEPA	3, 5
Installation 13		09/97	D	06/00	B	Oil, HW, WW	3, 4
Tenant 14	[Names]	07/98	C	12/01	B	WW, DW, Oil	3, 4, 5
Tenant 15	[Names]	12/95	E	04/99	A		2, 3, 4
Tenant 16	[Names]	08/96	D	04/99	B	HW, NEPA	3, 4
Tenant 17	[Names]	05/97	C	11/99	A		3, 4
Exempt Activities							
Activity 18	[Names]	04/95	E	None	X		X
Activity 19	[Names]	06/96	E	None	X		X
Activity 20	[Names]	12/96	E	None	X		X

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Notes for Table 5-2

¹ Scope codes:

- A = EMS Review only
- B = EMS Review and compliance assessment of selected media (indicate media)
- C = EMS Review and compliance assessment of ALL media
- D = Compliance assessment of selected media (indicate media)
- E = Compliance assessment of ALL media
- X = Exempt

² Media codes:

- PM = Program Management
- NEPA = National Environmental Policy Act
- P2 = Pollution Prevention
- EPCRA = Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act
- Air = Clean Air Act
- ODS = Ozone Depleting Substances
- WW = Clean Water Act (wastewater)
- DW = Drinking Water
- Oil = Oil Management and Contingency Planning
- PCB = Polychlorinated Biphenyls
- HW = Hazardous Waste Management
- PEST = Pesticides
- SW = Solid Waste Management
- IR = Installation Restoration
- ST = Underground and Above Ground Storage Tanks
- Noise = Noise Prevention
- EQA = Environmental Quality Assessment
- NR = Natural Resource Management
- CR = Cultural Resource Management
- TR = Environmental and Natural Resources Training
- RAD = Radon Assessment and Mitigation

³ Rationale codes:

- 1 = Comprehensive Internal Assessment Plan and EQA Report
- 2 = Excellent results on last ECE or external assessment
- 3 = Initial external assessment
- 4 = Interval since last site visit
- 5 = Average Internal Assessment Plan and EQA Report
- 6 = Unsatisfactory Internal Assessment Plan and EQA Report
- 7 = Known or suspected compliance/EMS issues
- 8 = Unsatisfactory results from last ECE or external assessment
- X = Exempt (Administrative or explain)

5.4.2 Conducting the External Assessment

While external assessors may also verify or validate compliance under the EQA, the primary focus of external assessment efforts is to determine whether the installation has successfully implemented management functions needed to achieve environmental objectives. Since installation personnel perform comprehensive inspections and/or compliance evaluations during the internal assessment, the Major Claimant can concentrate on management systems to determine the extent to which an installation has developed and implemented specific environmental protection programs and plans that, if properly managed, should ensure compliance and progress toward environmental excellence. The external assessment is an EMS review to focus on the quality and/or implementation of the program, not on actual compliance requirements. EMS Reviews are addressed in Chapter 2.

As with ECEs, assessors should review available documentation (e.g., IAPs, EQA Reports, internal assessment documentation, problem solving efforts, POA&Ms, P2 opportunity reports, EMS guidance) and interview appropriate personnel to determine if the EMS is functioning and individual responsibilities are being met. External assessors may also elect to inspect operations conducted at the installation to validate internal assessment inspections and other EMS functions.

5.5 Documenting the External Assessment

5.5.1 External Assessment Plan (EAP)

The format for the EAP is presented in Section 5.3.

5.5.2 External Assessment Report

The External Assessment Report should present the results of the Major Claimant's EMS Review and, if conducted, the results of any compliance evaluations. The organization of the External Assessment Report is at the discretion of the Major Claimant.

As suggested in Section 2.1, the External Assessment Report may address the following topics:

- Strengths and weaknesses of individual media programs or the EMS as a whole;
- Underlying causal factors (root causes) that may contribute to the occurrence of observed compliance deficiencies;
- The ability of the installation's compliance programs to be self-correcting;
- Strengths and weaknesses of each of the individual components/elements of an EMS; and
- The effectiveness of the system and identification of opportunities for improvement.

Alternatively, the report might address the installation's effectiveness in accomplishing each of the individual efforts within the planning loop, the evaluation loop, and the continuous improvement loop identified in Chapter 3.

A third approach is to document the installation's success in accomplishing each EMS activity listed in Section 2.4:

- Identify and track regulatory, DoD, and DoN requirements;
- Identify and rank practices which can or do impact the environment or other vulnerable assets;

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- Identify, prioritize, and document impacts of identified practices;
- Identify and implement P2 opportunities;
- Establish EMS goals and objectives;
- Implement initiatives to meet the EMS's goals and objectives;
- Establish an internal assessment that effectively identifies compliance deficiencies and EMS inconsistencies;
- Conduct appropriate "problem solving" that determines the underlying causes of deficiencies identified in both internal and external assessments; and
- Implement corrective actions that prevent reoccurrence of identified deficiencies.

If the Major Claimant conducts compliance evaluations as part of the external assessment, the results can be documented efficiently in the installation's ACE database. Findings and problem solving recommendations shall be included in the written External Assessment Report.

Regardless of the report's organization, suggested improvements in the installation's EMS should be clearly identified and explained. The scope of the external assessment, the installation/region assessed, the individuals conducting the assessment, and the Major Claimant's point of contact should also be documented.

Before leaving, external assessors should present an outbrief to the CO of the installation. The draft of the External Assessment Report should be distributed to the Commanding Officer of the installation, the Major Claimant, Major Claimants of any tenants, and installation staff responsible for the development or implementation of the EMS. The Major Claimant should release the final external assessment report to the installation within 60 days of the completion of the site visit.

The installation is responsible for following up on deficiencies identified in the external assessment and for documenting corrective actions in its internal assessment documentation. Internal assessment documentation is addressed in Section 4.4.2.

5.5.3 Claimant EQA Summary

Once a year, the Major Claimant prepares the Claimant EQA Summary, which reports on the health of the environmental programs at all installations and activities in the claimancy. The summary includes information on the critical issues that CNO/N45 should be aware of and that may require top level attention and/or resources.

The Claimant EQA Summary contains three items:

- Program Area Status Summary by Installation/Activity (chart);
- Status of Top 10 Environmental Issues/Concerns; and
- EAP Update.

Program Area Status Summary by Installation/Activity (chart). This chart is a compilation of the Program Area Status Summary Charts developed by the installations and provided in their EQA Reports. See Section 4.4.3 for rating criteria. For each program area marked as inadequate, a brief explanation for the rating should be included in the footnotes.

Status of Top 10 Environmental Issues/Concerns. Considering the issues and concerns expressed by installations throughout the claimancy and its observations from external assessments, the Major Claimant lists the top 10 issues and concerns it faces and what is being done to resolve each issue/concern.

EAP Update. OPNAVINST 5090.1B, Change 2, Chapter 20 requires the Major Claimant to review the EAP at least annually and update it as necessary. The Major Claimant includes the updated EAP in the Claimant EQA Summary. The update should reflect site visits completed and any changes to the scope and schedule of future site visits.

Suggested formats for the Program Area Status Summary and the External Assessment Plan and its updates are provided in Appendix F.

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